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is confident that the infant will be healthy, provided, of course, that he be well taken care of, and that his parents obey the necessary taboos. First, according to the native ideas, he must be adequately looked after. A mother who does not come and nurse her infant when he cries, if she is within hearing distance, is most unusual, and was never observed. The only reference to such an attitude was in folk-tales. There was one about a woman who left her baby on the beach while she went out on the reef to look for a certain kind of seaweed. The child cries out to his mother, "You come and give me milk." But the mother does not come. The infant cries out again, and this time the mother answers that she is busy getting seaweed and cannot come. A large black bird (*potot*) then flies down from a tree and kills the baby. The mother comes ashore and looks for her baby, and at first does not see him. Then she notices the bird running away, and at the same time finds her dead child. She weeps over the child. There is the usual mortuary feast.[1]

The young infant is an object of deep affection, not only to his mother, father, and sisters and brothers, but also to his grandmother, and to all the members of his clan and of the hamlet. It is only for the first few months that his maternal grandmother looks after him rather exclusively while the mother is away in the gardens. As soon as the child is able to toddle about a bit his care is divided among other members of the family. Most frequently it will be the father, and it is quite usual to see the father taking care of the baby while the mother is in the garden, or busy scraping taro. He will sit in the compound in front of the house, or on the beach, with the infant, playing with him, fondling and petting him. There is no differentiation on lines of sex in the display of affectionate tenderness towards the child. The father and

[1] The motif of this tale and the resulting moral occurred in only one other of the several hundred tales collected. In the other one the husband divorced his wife, who neglected her child.

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ashamed.[1] As far as I could ascertain, I think the same kind of shame exists between a father and his son, but I did not have the opportunity of investigating this matter fully, because I was so much more with the women than with the men in the casual, everyday, gossipy life, which is the time when this type of observation could best be made.

INSTRUCTION IN FOLK-TALES AND MYTHS

One aspect of the child's education is not so subtle. Definite instruction is given in the telling of folk-tales and myths. Sometimes the children may learn them casually as they sit around the campfires at night with the adults, but to assure the children's real knowledge of this folk literature, there is a period lasting three or four weeks during which the adult males and females tell the children tales at night around the fire. A feast marks the completion of this period for the relation of folk tales. The tales are very much in the nature of Aesop's Fables, in that many of them point a moral. Etiquette, taboos, customs, are all illustrated in these narratives, as is also the punishment for those who break taboos and customs. The best illustrations are some of the tales themselves. The following are a few:

> An old woman tells her two grandchildren not to take a certain path. She points to it and says: "This is not a good path. You must not go on it. There are bananas on this path and they are ripe, but you must not eat them." Then she points to another path as the one the children are to take.
>
> The next day the old woman sends the two children for some water and again reminds them that they are not to take the taboo path. But the children walk down

[1] In our own society most parents do not like to discuss their sex interests with their own children. The question of whether this is a universal characteristic between parents and children is for further investigation.

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881 to the other women in payment for their dancing the previous night. They pile it in their baskets and trudge home heavily laden. These women had brought taro the day before and baked it, and this remains at Ponatlege. The men go into the enclosure and eat pig and taro.[1]

The boys now remain in the enclosure for a few weeks. In the past they remained longer, but now after a few weeks they are sent to the Catholic Mission for instruction.[2] While they are in the enclosure the older men talk to them about fishing, hunting wild pig, etc.[3] No women are allowed in the enclosure, and they do not see the boys until they later ritually return to the society.

FOLK-TALES CONCERNING INITIATION

881 The attitude and part played by the women when the boys
539 go in to be circumcised is brought out rather clearly in folk-tales which deal with this subject. One is a tale of a mother who tried to keep her boy from being circumcised. The boys of the village were to be circumcised, and it was preceded by the usual ritual dancing of the women. Then, when the boys entered the enclosure the women cried and there was a fight between them and the men, as in the scene at Ponatlege just described. The mother of one of the boys ran away because she was afraid, then came back and tried to get her boy. The men prevented this and took the boy away. But she pursued the man who was carrying off her boy. The men turned and saw her, and then they killed

[1] The day after the feast I inquired about the food supply at Ponatlege. Although they had given away much food there was still plenty remaining for ordinary meals. They do not have these rites unless they have a large supply of food.

[2] The Catholic Mission has very cleverly availed itself of this period for instruction.

[3] My information on the instruction given is not very complete. As already stated, I did not go into the place where the boys were secluded, and during this initiation period was mostly with the women.

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both her and the boy and ate them. In the meantime the woman's clan relatives waited for her to come home. When she did not return and they learned what had happened, they killed a pig and made a big mortuary feast.

Another is a tale of a woman who wanted to look at a boy while he was in the enclosure. This young boy was in the enclosure during the period of seclusion which follows the circumcision. The wife of his maternal uncle came back from the garden with taro, which she put in the house and then purposely made the fire die. She wanted to look at the boy, and so she called out to him that her fire was dead and that he should bring her some fire (a smouldering log). The boy did this, and then returned to the enclosure. A little while later the woman put out her fire again, and called to the boy to bring out some fire. He did so and again returned to the enclosure. A third time the woman called out for some fire, and now the boy was very cross and cried out: "You call for fire all the time. I gave you fire before. Why do you make it die?" He was very angry, and putting his *biuk* on his arm, his *kepkep* on his breast, and some birds' feathers in his hair, he beat the *kolamuth* (hollowed tree-trunk used as a drum) and then put fire inside of it. He stood beside the burning *kolamuth* and sang a ditty for his *Tata* (maternal uncle) to come. The fire reached up and burned his legs as far as his knees. The boy sang his ditty again. The fire reached up higher. Now it was up to his waist. He kept on singing. Now the fire reached his breast. He continued singing. His *Tata* in the bush heard the boy crying out and asked himself, "Why is the boy calling? Someone must have made him cross." The boy cried out again, and the fire was now up to his neck. His *Tata* began running through the bush. By this time the fire was up to the boy's eyes. He still sang. The *Tata* rushed up and went immediately into the enclosure, but the boy had been completely burned up. The *Tata* asked his wife what it was all about,

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and she said that she just wanted some fire. But he saw into the real reason, which was that the woman liked the boy. He killed her, and then her clan relatives held fast a pig and made a big mortuary feast.[1]

There is another tale of boys being decoyed from their enclosure. Two boys left the enclosure where they were secluded to get some water. On the beach they saw a *kuwiwi* bird, which they tried to catch. The bird eluded them, running along the beach from hamlet to hamlet. The boys followed, always trying to catch the bird but not succeeding. Finally they came to a place where two women, who sent the bird as a decoy, awaited them. The women embraced them and had intercourse with them.[2]

The boys fought and broke away from the women finally and ran back to the enclosure. There they set fire to the *kolamuth*, stepped into the flames, and burned themselves to death. They sang as the flames crept higher and higher. The people in the bush garden heard the singing and came back to the village. They wanted to pull the boys out of the fire, but it was too late. They had been burned to death. The pigs were killed and a big feast made.

These tales reinforce what the rites indicate, namely, the jealous attitude of the women on the seclusion of the boys and the fact that there is a real cleavage between the mothers and the boys at this time. They also indicate a sexual desire of some of the women for the young boys.

MALANGGAN RITES

After these initial rites concerned with the boys entering the enclosure for circumcision, the *malanggans* begin to come

[1] This motif of crying out as the flames creep higher and higher, and the return of the people from the bush just too late, is a very common one through many tales.

[2] The folk-tale is not exactly clear as to whether the women just attempted to have coitus, or whether they succeeded.

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Bunglä: Zingiber (ginger). Used to cure swellings of skin; magic said over the leaves, which are then chewed and expectorated over the swollen part of the body. This, it is believed, makes the skin hot and the pain disappears. In India it is used as an aromatic stimulant, carminative, and stomachic; externally, as a local stimulant and rubefacient. We use mustard, which is a bit stronger than ginger, in the same way as a counter-irritant.

A large number of folk-tales and myths, handed down orally from one generation to another, form the literature of these people of Lesu. The tales contain moral precepts, theories of origin, accounts of semi-historical and imaginary happenings, and are counted as knowledge in this community. They are told in their proper context throughout the book.

MAGIC

The Lesu man's knowledge of his natural world may seem very inadequate to us, who have accumulated a more extensive, although still very incomplete, information. Yet limited as the information of these Melanesians may be, the Lesu man is well integrated with his natural world, because he thinks he controls it through magic. For whenever the Lesu man or woman feels uncertain of his own ability to control a situation he uses magic. To control the weather, to ensure a good crop, to make certain of a good catch of fish, to have success in his courtship of a woman, he has recourse to magic.[1]

MAGICIANS

Both men and women are magicians, although the former predominate. In Lesu there are thirteen people

[1] The pragmatic function of magic was first brought out by Professor Malinowski in his studies of the Trobriand Islanders. See his "Magic, Science, and Religion," in *Science, Religion, and Reality*. Ed. by J. Needham (1921).

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764 614 The payments for the pigs and services show very plainly that it is the clan relatives who are responsible for carrying out the mortuary rites. It is an economic matter and they are the ones who are under an obligation to make the payments. There are fewer exceptions to this rule than almost any other. When Kawitti died her son was absent at a distant village. There was no maternal nephew present either, and she had no daughter. She was survived by a husband, who, in the absence of a clan relative, made a very small burial feast. It was explained at the feast that it was a very small one and that as soon as the son came home he would make a big feast. Eleven days later the son returned, having walked from a far distant village, and after he finished wailing, he immediately began preparations for a really big feast. These preparations took about a week, at the end of which there was a large feast attended by over a hundred people. It was the son who officiated at the feast and who, assisted by his clan relatives, made the necessary payments. The husband of the dead woman was completely in the background.

538 764 614 The ending of the majority of folk tales and myths is also rather interesting, in showing the economic responsibility of the clan relatives for the mortuary rites. An overwhelming number of the folk tales end with the death of one or more of the main characters. The tales all conclude on exactly the same note, " The man died and then all the clan relatives held a pig and made a feast."[9]

RITES AFTER BURIAL

765 The rites after burial may be divided into two parts, those occurring in the period immediately after death (the first month) and those in the succeeding period, which extends to an indefinite number of years.

765 513 834 The sleeping arrangements and taboo on sexual intercourse for the extended family, which began during the burial rites, are continued in this first period. The men sleep in one house, frequently the men's house, and all the women sleep in another house, sometimes

[9] " Holding a pig " refers to holding it just before it is killed.